

# Watson Renews Fight for Property Tax Relief Plan

County Assessor Philip E. Watson today renewed his battle for property tax relief and property tax reform with an appeal to Gov. Ronald Reagan and top legislative leaders to enact a meaningful tax program at the next legislative session.

At the same time, Watson, sponsor of the 1 per cent property tax limit initiative on the November ballot, warned that unless substantial relief is enacted, the state must face the "economic consequences" and what he prophesied would be "severe and drastic political action."

The assessor, who was felled by a heart attack during the last month of the recent campaign, today stated that he could not now say what his role in such future action might be. "Much

depends on what the legislature does next year," he said.

"HOWEVER," he added, "it would be disastrous to assume that people are satisfied with the status quo or with the token relief in Proposition 1-A.

"More than two-million people voted for Proposition 9. And from my mail and phone calls, a lot of people who voted against Proposition 9 now realize they let themselves be scared out of their tax relief by the Halloween Hobgoblins of the opposition."

Watson has written to the Governor and legislative leaders to offer the cooperation of himself and his staff in helping to work out a meaningful property tax program.

The Assessor told the Sacramento leaders that despite the defeat of Proposition 9, the voters, by also turning down bond issues and tax overrides, had clearly shown that they had reached their limit as far as the property tax is concerned.

Watson told the Governor: "My concern for effective property tax relief and reform is as strong as it ever was.

"I firmly believe that if substantial steps are not taken in this direction during the next session of the legislature, the economic consequences of the disproportionate property tax burden and the ground swell of public opinion will eventually force political action much more severe and drastic than that encompassed in any of the recent initiatives and referendums."

# Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

Until recently all the troubles in the little TV town of "Peyton Place" were confined to the script. The actors frowned and sobbed on camera but the business office had been smiling continuously for five years over the show's success.

Last month the smiles were suddenly replaced by frowns. You couldn't distinguish the actors from the producers. The town was closing down — and just when it had been integrated, too.

ABC's decision to cancel the nocturnal soap opera was announced without fanfare. The network will merely reshuffle its schedule and make room for another show. But Twentieth Century-Fox is losing a production

and the studio publicists called for a demonstration of loyalty, suggesting that viewers express their dissatisfaction directly to ABC-TV, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York 10019.

LAST WEEK I checked to see if the studio's call was answered and ABC reports that viewers are taking it pretty much in stride. "There hasn't been any real increase in mail over what the show usually gets," said a network spokesman. "But people don't usually get upset about a cancellation until they tune in the show and find that it isn't there."

That will be next summer for "Peyton Place" but the network is easing the shock by cutting

the series back to one-a-week starting in January. Maybe the fans won't notice it at all. So far all the aggravation is on the part of the producers and it has reached the point where it is doubtful if any effort will be made to tie up the loose ends of the complicated story for anything resembling a happy ending.

But happiness was never one of the show's characteristics. Indeed, "Peyton Place" was the series that made Trouble fashionable. One solution, credited to someone on the production staff, is to have the show's newly arrived black family burn down the whole town.

MORE LIKELY, when it disappears in June, it will leave two unsolved rapes, four divorces, at least eight cases of adultery, a dozen high-priced stars, a Negro neurosurgeon — and my own mother — dangling in midair. (No, mother, I cannot do anything to help. You'll just have to develop some troubles of your own to entertain you!)

The show's demise will leave Hollywood's most lived-in set vacant. Even the fake-front houses on the main street must have been equipped by now with real plumbing and full-size basements in anticipation of a run rivaling "Abie's Irish Rose."

In its five-year life "Peyton Place" has kept its fans happily upset from week to week with every dramatic device known to script-writers and every human frailty known to God. It has been smoothly produced by Paul Monash and its performers have been lovingly photographed under the direction of William Cronjager, one of the few cameramen in Hollywood who understand that television is a medium of close-ups.

AS USUAL, the cause of death was audience ratings. "Peyton Place" had been fingered by the fickle families of the Nielsen rating service whose preferences are the final measure of a show's success. In the most

## Birchers Slate Civil War Film

The South Bay and Harbor Chapters of the John Birch Society will present a free, public showing of the film, "Only the Brave Are Free" Thursday at 8 p.m. at the American Opinion Library, 1532 Carson St. The film concerns the Spanish Civil War.

Ron Wright, society coordinator, will lead a discussion following the film.

comprehensive of recent surveys, the Monday night segment was in 86th place on a list of 97 shows, attracting only 15 per cent of the sets in use at that time. Most of the viewers were tuned to the free-swinging, bachelor-pad antics of "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In" on another channel.

Maybe America is tired of worrying about sex and has decided to laugh at it instead.

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